An Immigration Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador: *Opportunity for Growth*

Discussion Paper

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Send written comments on this discussion paper
to the following address before September 30, 2005.

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Premier's Message

On behalf of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, I am pleased to support Minister Burke and the Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment in plans to develop an immigration strategy for the province.

Increased immigration presents an excellent opportunity to stimulate and enhance the economic, social and cultural development of the province.

Many years ago, immigrants from primarily England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales and France laid the foundations for the wonderful province in which we live today. Throughout the years, immigrants have continued to make valuable contributions to the province.

We need to attract more immigrants and we need to take steps to ensure that those who do come here choose to stay.

Your involvement is essential. Communities and individuals need to participate in the province's strategy if it is to be successful. It is my hope that you will read this discussion document and provide your views as we move ahead on this exciting initiative.

Danny Williams, Q.C.
Premier

Minister's Message

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador believes that immigrants make significant contributions to the economic, social, and cultural development of our province. We value those contributions, whether they are the provision of medical services to rural areas of the province, or whether they are through the establishment of businesses that hire local residents. We also value the new perspectives and innovative ideas that newcomers bring to our province and the diversity that people from other cultures bring.

The Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment is leading the development of a strategy aimed at increasing the numbers of immigrants to the province and improving the retention rate of those who arrive.

This discussion paper has been prepared to seek input from stakeholders and the general public on the best way to proceed with this initiative. I look forward to hearing your views either during a consultation session or through a written submission.

Joan Burke
Minister
Human Resources, Labour and Employment

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Introduction

Newfoundland and Labrador, like other parts of Canada, had its beginnings through immigration, largely from England, Ireland, Wales, Scotland and France. This province provided a new home to many who were fleeing difficult conditions in their homelands, for example the potato famine in Ireland. Many early immigrants made a significant contribution to the economic, social and cultural development of the province.

"A Canadian is an immigrant with seniority"
Cassandra Benyon, Toronto Star

Immigrants continue to make significant contributions to our province and our economy. Consider, for example, Rodrigues' Winery in Markland, Terra Shoes in Harbour Grace, Superior Gloves in Point Leamington – each started by immigrants and each creating employment opportunities for local residents in rural areas. Consider also the contribution immigrants have made to our culinary experiences with the many restaurants featuring food from other countries. Let's not forget the contribution that immigrants make to the development of the province's artistic community, by sculptors, painters, musicians, and other artists who have moved here from other countries.

In recent years, the most recognizable public "face" of immigration in Newfoundland and Labrador has been foreign-born doctors, highly valued for their contribution to health care services, particularly in rural areas.

While Ontario, British Columbia and Quebec have long been preferred destinations for immigrants to Canada, other Canadian provinces have embraced the goal of increased immigration in recent years. Manitoba has made great strides in increasing its numbers; Saskatchewan has developed initiatives to increase immigration; and Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia have recently launched strategies to increase immigration. New Brunswick and Alberta are also in the process of doing so.

It is an opportune time for Newfoundland and Labrador to promote more immigration to our province because attracting specialized skill sets, and growing our population will be key to the overall growth of the province.

Government has decided to develop an immigration strategy with a view to increasing immigration and its benefits to this province. An important part of the process is hearing from residents and stakeholders as to how best to proceed. To that end this discussion paper will serve as a valuable tool to set the context and the rationale for an immigration strategy.

Currently, the number of immigrants attracted to the province is very low and our retention rate the lowest in the country. Increased immigration will complement other initiatives underway such as the regional diversification strategy and a provincial innovation strategy as well as the development of the local labour market to address current and projected skills shortages.

Increased immigration will be possible only if there are supportive policies, proacative initiatives and if people and communities are supportive of this direction. That is why government will be looking at developing new policies and a 'welcoming communities' strategy which will be a crucial part of the overall immigration strategy.

The purpose of this discussion paper is to invite your comments and ideas about immigration and how an immigration strategy can best support government's goals to increase economic growth, create a diverse population, and ensure a prosperous future for all.

This paper will serve a number of purposes.

- It provides a brief overview of immigration in Canada, the Atlantic Region and Newfoundland and Labrador;
- It provides a rationale for developing an immigration strategy at this time;
- It outlines a number of key challenges and opportunities;
- It outlines what an immigration strategy could look like; and
- It gives information on how input can be provided on the development of a provincial immigration strategy (regular mail, email, or to a website).

Appendix A asks a number of questions about immigration and the focus of a strategy for our province.

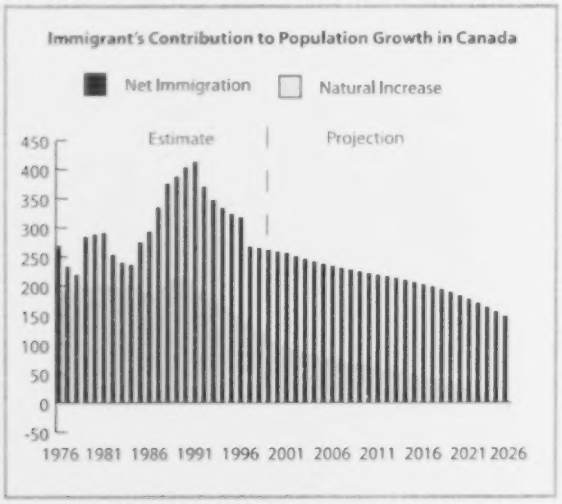
Appendix B gives definitions for the different categories of immigrants.

Immigration - The Canadian Picture

Immigration has always played a significant role in the growth of Canada. Currently, almost one in five (18 percent) of Canada's population is foreign born. Only two other countries – the United States (28.4 million) and Germany (7.3 million) – have more immigrants than Canada's 5.4 million recorded in the 2001 Census. (Canadian Labour and Business Centre).

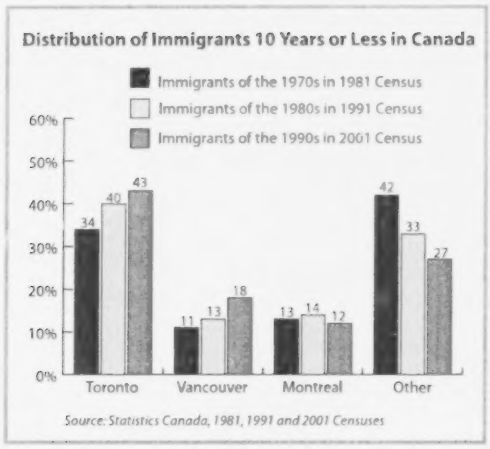
Numbers of immigrants to Canada have varied over the years, peaking at about 400,000 per year in the early 1900s, dipping to less than 100,000 between 1920 and 1950, and remaining steady at an average of 225,000 in recent years.

As the following chart shows, Statistics Canada projects that by the year 2025, 100 percent of Canada's population growth will be attributed to immigration.



Where Immigrants Tend to Settle and Why

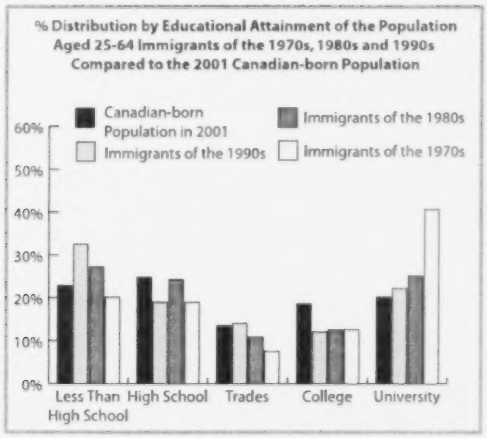
Immigrants are attracted primarily to the major urban centres of Canada. Statistics Canada data indicate that over 75 percent of all immigrants to Canada reside in Toronto, Montreal, or Vancouver. Toronto alone is home to 43 percent of all recent immigrants and according to the 2001 Census, about 44 percent of Toronto's population was born outside Canada.



Immigrants are Highly Educated and Younger

As part of the Government of Canada's selection criteria for skilled workers, points are awarded to potential immigrants based on a number of factors, including education and age.

As a result, immigrants contribute to an increased education level in the Canadian population and lower the average age of our population. Over 90 percent of applicants under the skilled worker class (see Appendix B) have post-secondary credentials, compared with 43 percent of Canadian adults. Over 40 percent of immigrants in the 1990s had a university education, compared to 20 percent of Canadian born residents.



Because there are extra points awarded to potential immigrants who are in their economically productive years, immigrants to Canada are younger than the general population. For example, from 2001 - 2003, over 86 percent of the immigrants to our province were under 44 years of age, and 40 percent were under 24 years of age. In a province where the population is rapidly aging, attracting and retaining young, educated immigrants may help to address some of our demographic challenges.

Did You Know...

In the three-year period ending in 2003, approximately 25 percent of immigrants to the Atlantic Region were under 15 years of age compared to 22 percent of immigrants to all of Canada.

Immigration - The Atlantic Provinces

Atlantic Canada represents 7.6 percent of Canada's population yet attracts only 1.2 percent of all immigrants to Canada. In 2003, the four Atlantic provinces attracted 2,650 immigrants to the region, with Nova Scotia receiving more than 50 percent (1,419). Though numbers are low, immigrants to Atlantic Canada bring much needed skills and diversity, including entrepreneurial skills to start businesses which employ other Atlantic Canadians.

For these reasons, Atlantic Premiers have agreed to work together on strategies to increase the numbers of immigrants to the region and to improve retention rates. Individually, each province is undertaking work in the area of immigration.

In December 2004, Prince Edward Island initiated its "People Project" with a goal of increasing its population by 1.5 percent annually. Immigration is a key feature of this initiative.

In January 2005, Nova Scotia launched an immigration strategy which aims to improve its retention rate from 40 to 70 percent and more than double its annual intake of immigrants to 3,600. Nova Scotia is also currently in the process of negotiating a framework agreement with Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) to meet the province's immigration goals and objectives.

New Brunswick is in the process of developing a comprehensive immigration strategy that will enhance its capacity to attract and retain immigrants in cooperation with federal, provincial, municipal and community agencies and organizations. The strategy is expected to be completed by October 2005.

Did You Know...

The 2001 Census showed that the top two source countries for immigration to the Atlantic Provinces were the United Kingdom and the United States.

Newfoundland and Labrador is now joining the other Atlantic Provinces in looking at opportunities for increased immigration. Of particular interest is how immigration can play a role in growing the provincial economy, address specific skills shortages, and contribute to population growth.

Government will link its provincial immigration strategy to the one currently under development by the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency entitled "Building Human Capital in Atlantic Canada: The Immigration Factor". By working with the other Atlantic provinces on awareness building, attraction, and retention efforts, economies of scale can be achieved.

Immigration - Newfoundland and Labrador

The number of immigrants to this province is very low, and with the exception of 2003 had been relatively stable. Also the province has a low retention rate, which Statistics Canada has reported at 36 percent, the lowest of all provinces.

Using Citizenship and Immigration Canada data, the following table shows the numbers of immigrants, international students, and temporary foreign workers in the province since 1998.

Year	Immigrants	International Students	Temporary Foreign Workers
1998	399	N/A	N/A
1999	421	611	N/A
2000	415	629	1,194
2001	402	662	1,136
2002	405	723	1,218
2003	359	856	1,421
2004	576*		

**Preliminary number published by CIC.*

Did You Know....

Newfoundland and Labrador welcomes approximately 150 refugees annually.

At a retention rate of only 36 percent, this would mean that of the 2,401 immigrants to Newfoundland and Labrador between 1998 and 2003, only 864 would still be in the province.

Immigrant numbers represent those in all categories (see Appendix A) including government-assisted refugees who are selected overseas primarily from refugee camps and are directed to the province by Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

International students include all those who have been issued student visas to study at our public and private post-secondary institutions as well as those in the K-12 education system.

Temporary foreign workers include all individuals working in the province under a 'work permit' issued by Citizenship and Immigration Canada when an employer has demonstrated to Human Resources and Skills Development Canada that there is no Canadian resident available with the specific skill set required.

While the majority of the 359 arrivals in 2003 settled in St. John's, some settled in rural areas as can be seen in the following table. In fact, of the total immigrants to the province (excluding the approximately 150 government-assisted refugees who come to St. John's and are 'settled' by the Association for New Canadians), about 50 percent settle in rural areas. In addition to those shown, many other communities received one or two immigrants bringing the total to 359.

Community	# of Immigrants	Community	# of Immigrants
St. John's	237	Bay Roberts	4
No Community Specified	33	Grand Falls	4
Corner Brook	11	Lewisporte	4
Mount Pearl	9	Twillingate	4
St. Anthony	9	Roddickton	4
Carbonear	8	Gander	3
Goose Bay	6	Labrador City	2
Paradise	5		

Of these 359 immigrants, 123 (34 percent) had university education, including 36 (10 percent) with either a Master's degree or a Doctorate.

In 1999, the Province signed an agreement with CIC to establish the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) which allows the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to nominate immigrants with occupational or entrepreneurial skills that can help further the economic and social development of the province. The PNP program has three categories: occupational skilled worker, immigrant entrepreneur, and immigrant partner.

Occupational Skilled Worker Category is for an applicant with specialized skills and experience which may fill a shortage or specialized need in the provincial labour market.

Immigrant Entrepreneur Category is for an applicant who intends to be self-employed and wants to start a new business or purchase an existing business.

Immigrant Partner Category is for an applicant who invests in and operates a new or existing business located in Newfoundland and Labrador, at a director level or as a senior manager. More information on the program is available at ***www.nlpnp.ca***.

Settlement and integration services for newcomers have been funded primarily by the federal government. Funding levels are determined by applying a formula based on a rolling three-year average of the numbers of immigrants annually. CIC funds service providing organizations through a competitive bidding process.

Programs & Services of the ANC

- *Settlement Orientation & Referral*
- *English as a Second Language*
- *Employment/Career Services*
- *Host/Volunteer Programs*
- *Translation Services*
- *Public Education*
- *Health Education*
- *Cross-Cultural Awareness*
- *Support for Youth*
- *Social/Cultural Activities*
- *Research & Development*

In Newfoundland and Labrador, the Association for New Canadians (ANC) has been the successful bidder, and CIC has a contribution agreement with them to deliver services to newcomers (both immigrants and government-assisted refugees). Also, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada and the provincial department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment fund the ANC to provide employment services for newcomers.

Canadian Heritage also provides funding to local groups including the ANC for programs designed to promote citizenship, eliminate racism and foster multiculturalism.

The provision of settlement services is an employment generator for the province in that the ANC employs both local residents and new Canadians to deliver its many programs and services.

Immigration Policy

Role of the Federal Government

Under the Canadian constitution, responsibility for immigration is shared among the federal government and the provinces and territories, although federal legislation takes precedence. Federally, the Department of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) and the Canadian Border Security Agency (CBSA) have responsibility for immigration matters. In partnership with provinces and territories, CIC sets the annual numbers of immigrants and refugees that Canada will accept. The legislation under which CIC operates is the *Immigrant and Refugee Protection Act* (IRPA) and The Citizenship Act. CIC employees work in 90 Canadian embassies, high commissions and consulates around the world and process applications for immigration, refugee resettlement, temporary resident visas, study permits, visitors' permits, and work permits. There are also processing centers in Canada, and a local CIC office in St. John's serving the province. For more information on Citizenship and Immigration Canada, its mandate and programs, visit their website at ***www.cic.gc.ca***.

Increasing Provincial Role in Immigration

Historically, many of the smaller provinces, including Newfoundland and Labrador, have played a more passive role with respect to immigration. Immigration was seen as an issue primarily for larger centres in Canada such as Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver, Calgary, or Ottawa.

In recent years, however, all provinces and territories are becoming increasingly aware of the contribution that immigrants make to our country.

Framework Agreements

The federal *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* (IRPA) expressly commits to cooperate with the provinces and territories in a variety of matters, including agreements to coordinate and implement immigration policies and programs. Under Section 8 of the IRPA, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration has the authority to sign agreements with provinces and territories that will facilitate the coordination and implementation of immigration policies

Did You Know . . .

Currently the ANC clients originate from:

- *Ethopia*
- *Turkey*
- *Sierra Leone*
- *Colombia*
- *Iraq*
- *Former Yugoslavia*
- *Norway*
- *China*
- *Sudan*
- *Liberia*
- *Kosovo*
- *Korea*
- *Russia*
- *Kazakhstan*
- *Eritrea*
- *St. Pierre*
- *Egypt*
- *Japan*
- *Iran*
- *Georgia*
- *Moldova*

and programs. To date, bilateral agreements have been signed with nine provinces, including Newfoundland and Labrador, and with one territory.

There are also opportunities to negotiate memorandum of understanding (MOUs), which give provinces the authority to go forward with specific initiatives or pilot projects. For example, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and CIC signed an MOU in March 2005 allowing international graduates from publicly-funded post-secondary institutions to work in the province for up to two years upon graduation, instead of one year as was the previous case.

Why An Immigration Strategy Now

The number of immigrants that Newfoundland and Labrador attracts does not match our proportional share of the total Canadian population. While the province makes up 1.6 percent of the Canadian population, it receives only 0.16 percent of total immigration to Canada – only one-tenth of its proportional share.

There are also a number of other reasons that Newfoundland and Labrador is looking at immigration at this time in its history.

- Immigration will help to enhance the economic growth of the province.
- An immigration strategy will support the efforts of our post-secondary institutions and K-12 schools in attracting increased numbers of international students.
- Immigration can help to address some demographic challenges (e.g. declining and aging population).
- Immigration is an important element in addressing specific skill shortages (e.g. rural physicians, other medical professionals, university professors) and supporting development of a skilled labour force.
- There are strong linkages to the province's economic and social development agenda such as the innovation strategy and the regional diversification strategy.

Recent research by Richard Florida, Professor of Economic Development at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, points to an area's Mosaic Index (the proportion of the population that is foreign-born) as an indicator of a community's competitiveness. The higher the index, the better it is for competitiveness. Immigrants bring links to other countries that can be used to export goods and services. They bring technical skills, linguistic diversity, international experiences, and innovative ideas, as well as capital investment and entrepreneurial skills.

In an August 2004 article entitled 'Why Atlantic Canada Remains White and Poor', Globe and Mail columnist John Ibbitson states 'Atlantic Canada will only emerge from relative economic decline when it finds ways to persuade at least some of the people arriving in Canada from Beijing and Bombay to move there.'

A recent survey of 401 employers in the province conducted by Wade Locke Consulting under the auspices of the Harris Centre of Memorial University found that 82 percent agreed that a multicultural workforce enhances creativity in the workplace. Also, of the 328 employers who answered the question, 246 (75 percent) agreed that having employees from other countries can improve export opportunities. In the same survey, 32 companies (8 percent) reported that they have hired immigrants or international workers, and 97 percent of those reported having positive work experiences with them.

"Newfoundland and Labrador needs a positive immigration policy to stimulate the rural economy. I have difficulty attracting specialized skill sets needed at the Winery; currently I'm seeking to hire a biochemist or chemical engineer specializing in food so that a new line of business in neutraceuticals can be developed. I'm also looking for a wine master/distiller. While I can find qualified individuals in Canada, they will not relocate to rural Newfoundland and Labrador. That is why immigration is so important. We can often find highly skilled individuals in countries like Romania, Bulgaria, India, who are seeking a better life and are willing to settle in rural areas."

Hilary Rodrigues
Rodrigues Winery
Markland

In addition to their economic contributions, immigrants also enrich our social and cultural lives. Immigrants share their art and music, and their different foods, fashions, and customs. Immigrants also contribute to the community through volunteer activities.

Government is taking an aggressive approach to ensuring a prosperous future for our province, and increased immigration will support this goal.

Increased immigration will also support the Innovation Strategy currently under development as well as the goals of the Rural Secretariat through its provincial and regional Councils. Furthermore, increased immigration will support the development of the local labour market in anticipation of future needs and current and projected skills shortages.

Immigrants Contribute to Economic and Social Development

Immigrants contribute to the economic and social development of the areas in which they settle. Consider the economies of Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver in comparison to those of some other areas of Canada. Studies indicate that diversity in a population contributes to creativity in workplaces, increased innovation, and thriving economies.

There are many successful immigrant entrepreneurs operating in the province and providing employment opportunities for local residents. Kim Lee Tailors in St. John's, Terra Nova Shoes in Harbour Grace, Cape St. Mary's Enterprises, Fisher's Inn in Port Rexton, Danish Mink Farmers in Harcourt, Botwood and Cavendish, Vis-a-Vis Graphics, as well as Bianca's Restaurant, the Magic Wok Eatery, the Gypsy Tea Room, India Gate, and many other restaurants and businesses throughout the province are but a few examples.

There are also a number of highly-skilled professionals including physicians, scientists, professors, and oil workers, as well as world-class artists and sculptors from other countries who are now residing in and making significant economic, social and cultural contribution to the province.

In September 2003 a Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce (CIBC) World Markets publication released an article by Benjamin Tal entitled "Canadian Small Business - A Growing Force." Identifying eight indicators of small business growth potential, one of which is the share of the population which is foreign-born. The greater the proportion the greater the potential.

In 2001, the four Atlantic provinces had the lowest share of foreign-born population in Canada (New Brunswick - 3.1%, Nova Scotia - 4.6%, Prince Edward Island - 3.1%, and Newfoundland and Labrador - 1.6%). For comparison, Ontario's share is 26.8% and British Columbia's is 26.1%.

Support for the Province's Innovation Strategy

Government is in the process of developing an innovation strategy. During recent stakeholder consultations, one of the themes that emerged was the importance of immigration policies in attracting world-class researchers and specialists to the province. The fresh perspectives and new ideas that newcomers bring are extremely beneficial in fostering innovation.

An immigration strategy will help to support local economic development efforts and increase the competitiveness of the province in the global economy.

Support for the Province's Regional Diversification Strategy

In March, 2005, Government announced a regional diversification strategy and the establishment of nine sustainable regions which will each have its own economic development strategy. Nine regional councils will be established and funding has been announced to support the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises in each of the regions. An immigration strategy for the province will complement the efforts of regional councils.

An Immigration Strategy could Assist in International Student Recruitment Efforts

The province's educational institutions, primarily Memorial University and College of the North Atlantic, but also the Eastern School District and the Humber Education Alliance, are actively recruiting international students. International students add a multicultural dimension to the institutions that serves to enrich the experiences of all students. This effort is also an economic generator as international students pay higher fees and create economic spin-off in the community at large. It has been found that each international student contributes between $10,000 and $20,000 annually to the local economy (in addition to tuition fees). They pay rent, purchase food and clothing and pay for services such as entertainment. It has also been found that international students are a draw for tourists and visitors from their home countries, as quite often their parents come to visit at least once during a four-year program.

"In the early 70s six of us came to Memorial's Graduate School of Anthropology/Sociology from the United States and other parts of Canada. All of us remained here because of Newfoundland and Labrador's quality of life, opportunity to succeed, ability to make a difference and the friends we have made."

Susan Sherk
AMEC Earth & Environmental

International students could form a pool of potential future immigrants. It is important that government work in partnership with educational institutions, particularly Memorial University, to explore ways to encourage graduates to remain in the province.

A provincial immigration strategy will complement the efforts of our educational institutions in foreign student recruitment.

The Challenges of Demographic Change

A side benefit of an immigration strategy is that it will help to address a number of demographic challenges which the province currently faces.

Population Decline

Since the mid-1970s, Newfoundland and Labrador has gone from having the highest birth rate in Canada to the lowest. During the period 1991 to 2001, the population of this province declined by 10.06 percent from 579,525 to 521,200 and currently stands at approximately 516,000. This trend of decline is expected to continue but the rate of decline will slow. The Newfoundland and Labrador Economics and Statistics Branch has developed population projections out to the year 2019. For the period 2005 to 2019, medium scenario projections indicate that the population will continue to decline from 516,100 to 495,736, a further drop of 3.95 percent.

Out Migration

From the 1970s to the 1990s, net out-migration (the difference between the number leaving and the number entering the province) ranged from less than 100 to just over 2000 annually. However, during the early 1990s, likely as a result of the cod moratorium. the rate of out-migration increased dramatically. For example, in 1997, there was a net out-migration to other provinces of 8,522 (6,963 arrived; but 15,485 left).

Many who have left the province are young people. In 2003/04, 50 percent of those who left the province were between 15 and 29 years of age, while only 38 per cent of those who entered the province were in that age group. This is of particular importance given that this age group represents those of prime child-bearing age.

"The medium-growth projection indicates that the population of Newfoundland and Labrador will decline steadily, falling about 8% between 2001 and 2026. With net out-migration from Newfoundland and Labrador to other provinces still projected over the next twenty-five years, the strongest contributor to population growth will be international immigration."
Atlantic Provinces Economic Council Report Card
Longer-Term Population Trends in Atlantic Canada, July 2002

Aging Population

Newfoundland and Labrador's population is aging more rapidly than that of the rest of Canada. In addition to overall population decline, the numbers of individuals aged 55 and older are increasing. During the 2005 to 2019 period, the cohort aged 65 and over is expected to increase from 67,618 to 107,961, an increase of 59.6 percent. At the same time the group aged 15 – 29 will decrease by 23.6 percent. There are a number of economic and fiscal effects of a declining, aging population.

Economic/Fiscal Effects

A declining population has negative effects on the provincial economy, as having fewer people means less demand for goods and services. A declining population could also affect others' perception of our economy and its potential for growth. In order to grow the economy, Newfoundland and Labrador must have the capacity to compete in a global marketplace and be seen as a thriving, vibrant place where people want to live and work, a place that combines economic opportunity with a quality of life second to none.

Demographic trends will also affect the fiscal capacity of the Province as a declining and aging population will mean fewer workers and less tax revenues for government.

A declining population affects the calculation of federal transfer payments, and also has implications for service delivery and infrastructure. Despite the smaller tax base, it costs almost as much to provide services (roads, electricity, water and sewer, etc.) to a community of 200 as it does to a community of 400. A declining population

also impacts our educational institutions' ability to offer the wide range of courses and programs currently offered to local students, e.g. the lower demand often leads institutions to decrease the variety of courses offered.

Immigration will Support a Growing Economy

An immigration strategy will help to meet specific skills shortages in a growing economy. In 2003, 217,800 people were employed in Newfoundland and Labrador on an average monthly basis, the highest level ever reported. The overall unemployment rate has also been steadily declining in recent years, with the March 2005 figures showing 16.8 percent, a decline of 2.3 percent since 1996.

With the economic development projects currently underway and prospects on the horizon (Voisey's Bay nickel, development of the Hebron and Ben Nevis oil fields, increased exploration activities in the St. Lawrence Basin, the possibility of the development of the Lower Churchill), it is anticipated that there will be skills shortages in various sectors.

"Many immigrant families like Newfoundland because it's a safe place to raise children and they love the slower pace and the friendliness of the people however staying in the province is dependent on them getting appropriate employment."

Doydette Quince
Multicultural Womens Organization of Newfoundland and Labrador

Businesses in Newfoundland and Labrador are reporting they expect employment levels to increase for the next three years and some are already experiencing skills shortages. A 2002 survey conducted by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business on labour availability found that of the 89 respondents from Newfoundland and Labrador, 38 percent reported they expect employment levels to increase. A further 50 percent reported that they had experienced a lack of candidates with the required skills/education in their area and 31 percent reported too few people in their local area looking for work. When asked ways that governments can help reduce the shortage of labour, 6 percent said 'allow more flexible immigration practices.' While this number is low, it does demonstrate that some employers recognize the importance of immigration in addressing skills shortages.

In the previously mentioned March 2005 survey of 401 businesses in the province, 30 percent indicated they have experienced difficulty in filling highly skilled positions. Many may ask why government would not place its focus on ensuring that Newfoundland and Labrador residents are prepared to fill current and existing skills shortages. Government does make a considerable investment in the development of a skilled local labour force. For example, in 2004/05 the provincial government provided $49 million to the College of the North Atlantic and $151 million to Memorial

University. Also, each year Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC), through a co-managed Labour Market Development Agreement with the provincial government, spends approximately $130 million in Newfoundland and Labrador on skills training and labour market supports for unemployed workers. However, despite these measures there is likely to be a continued demand for skilled workers that immigration could help address. Statistics Canada projects that by 2011, immigration will account for 100 percent of net labour force growth in Canada.

Challenges and Opportunities

Attraction of Immigrants – The Challenges

Newfoundland and Labrador has a number of challenges in attracting immigrants including:

"This province is a paradise on the earth, full of warm, compassionate and hard-working people."

Andom Gebru
Recent Immigrant to Newfoundland & Labrador

- Immigrants are attracted to large, urban centres such as Toronto, Vancouver, or Montreal with well-established immigrant communities.
- Immigrants tend to settle where they already have family and friends. Because we have such low numbers, our ability to attract family and friends is limited.
- Immigrants are attracted to an area where there is opportunity for employment. Our unemployment rate can be discouraging to potential immigrants.
- Many potential immigrants do not know anything about our province.
- There are many misperceptions about conditions here in Newfoundland and Labrador, from employment opportunities and level of services available to the weather.
- It appears that some staff at overseas visa posts are not fully familiar with the realities of this province and are reported to give inaccurate and misleading information to potential immigrants and international students.
- There are no 'incentives' in the national immigration system to encourage individuals to settle in particular areas of Canada.

Attraction of Immigrants - The Opportunities

"I'm really enjoying the course at the College of the North Atlantic in Stephenville. The instructor is doing a great job in communicating with us and explaining everything so that we understand. The people here are very friendly and helpful. My fellow classmates from Libya and I share a lifelong dream to live in Canada, and we would definitely consider returning to Newfoundland and Labrador to work if there was an opportunity to do so."

Mai wan Sheburi
Student
Heavy Equipment Service Technician
College of the North Atlantic
Stephenville Crossing

Despite the challenges, there are many opportunities. This province has much to offer. Potential newcomers need to know about the advantages of living in Newfoundland and Labrador: safe communities, a growing economy, relatively low cost of living, friendly people, open spaces, pristine wilderness areas, high quality of life, rich and diverse culture, spectacular scenery, excellent education system (both K-12 and post-secondary, many with world-class facilities), competitive business climate, and excellent, accessible settlement services that include language instruction and a variety of programs and services with no waiting lists.

A recently completed "Barriers to Retention" study noted that many newcomers to the province are quite impressed with how peaceful it is and with the little overt racism displayed. International students at Memorial University noted that low numbers of immigrants was seen as a positive in that there was a better opportunity to learn about another culture and to learn English. There is a need to increase our promotional activities so that potential immigrants will know about this province and the advantages of settling here.

Retention of Immigrants – The Challenges

Newfoundland and Labrador does not retain many of the immigrants who initially come here. For example, while the province is quite successful in attracting international medical graduates as rural physicians, retention remains a challenge. Many move to other provinces after a short stay here. There are a number of reasons for this including work demands on a lone physician and a lack of employment opportunities for spouses. Creating welcoming communities with effective programs and services for newcomers and their families is essential. The more welcoming the community, the more likely newcomers are to stay.

"I love it here because this place offers a safe and caring environment for me and my family."

Noushaba Sheikh
New Canadian Citizen
St. John's, formerly from Bangladesh

Retention of Immigrants – The Opportunities

Just as locally-born residents tend to have a fierce loyalty to this province, many newcomers also quickly adopt their new home and want to stay especially if they are able to find suitable employment. Even some immigrants and refugees who move on to other provinces come 'home' to Newfoundland and Labrador for their holidays.

"Friendly does not easily translate into friendships."
Immigrant in St. John's interviewed for a recent study on Retention and Integration of Immigrants in Newfoundland and Labrador "Are we Really?"

Early indications are that our retention rate is increasing as our economy improves. With some targeted retention strategies there is potential for vast improvement in this area. Developing or enhancing retention strategies will be a major consideration in the provincial immigration strategy.

Successful Integration – The Challenges

The most critical phase in the immigration process is integration. There are many elements to successful integration upon arrival in a new country, such as finding suitable accommodations, finding a school, making new friends, learning a new currency, and shopping for familiar food. And for many, a critical element is learning a new language while coping with other cultural adjustments.

Some newcomers want to start a business and need help in working through the various regulations and licensing requirements of the province. While the services are available, newcomers may not always be aware of them, or they may not be available in the local area where the newcomer is located.

Newcomers from other countries need a helping hand to guide them through the process of establishing themselves in their communities. Successful integration depends largely on the type and quality of settlement services a newcomer receives once he or she arrives.

People will stay only if they are truly welcomed in their new community, can make a reasonable living to provide for their families, and build supportive networks in their workplaces and communities.

"Newfoundland and Labrador has quite a lot to offer newcomers. In addition to the welcoming environment, quality programs can be accessed without waiting lists or lengthy delays. With over 25 years' experience in the field of immigrant settlement, we feel that we have developed an excellent infrastructure and resource base to support programming. Even if newcomers eventually choose to settle elsewhere in Canada, this province is a great place to lay the foundation for a successful settlement experience."
Bridget Foster, Executive Director ANC

The settlement services provided by the Association for New Canadians are excellent; however, except for a limited outreach service, they are available only in St. John's. CIC also contracts, through a competitive bidding process, with the College of the North Atlantic to provide Enhanced Language Instruction for newcomers.

Successful Integration – The Opportunities

The high quality of services provided by the ANC has been fully recognized and the Association has received the Citation for Canadian Citizenship award. The quality services and extensive experience of this organization are tremendous strengths on which the province can build, possibly by supporting expansion of the ANC's services to other communities.

While the ANC is the only government-funded settlement agency, the Refugee Immigrant Advisory Council (RIAC) in St. John's advocates on behalf of immigrants and refugees in the province and offers advice and support. There are also a number of multicultural organizations which support newcomers in various aspects of integration.

There is a role for communities and local residents in welcoming immigrants. We need to build on our reputation for being warm, open, helpful and friendly to strangers, especially tourists. This kind of welcoming attitude needs to be extended to immigrants to our province so that they will enjoy a successful integration. The importance of welcoming communities has already been recognized by many local areas of the province, especially in Labrador and in Central Newfoundland and Labrador.

"I came to Newfoundland in search of a higher education, and I can say that Memorial is the challenge I was looking for. The great hospitality of this province is reflected in the faculty and staff, making it feel like home. I've had such a good life and educational experience at Memorial, I can even see myself living here in the future."

Edgar Lopez
Engineering Student

A 'tool kit' of ideas for small communities interested in the attraction and retention of newcomers has been developed by a national working group funded by CIC. This 'tool kit' should be available to interested communities within a few months.

Key Partners in Strategy Development

A successful immigration strategy will need strong partnerships and will require the support and active participation of service-providing organizations, educational institutions, the business community, professional associations, labour groups, regional development boards, the Rural Secretariat regional councils, community groups, religious organizations, multicultural and

ethnic associations, and all three orders of government. Two key stakeholder groups warrant special mention.

Memorial University

Memorial University is a key stakeholder in the development of an immigration strategy for the province. First, as an employer, Memorial University is interested in attracting top-notch professional staff. Across Canada there is an increasing demand for professors due to retirements. Canada's universities produce about 4,000 PhDs annually (only about 40% of them choose to work in academia), but are projecting a need to fill between 30,000 and 40,000 positions by 2011. In Memorial's case, there are currently about 900 faculty members, 300 of whom are expected to retire by the year 2012. Memorial University will be in competition with other universities in Canada, and Canada will be competing with other countries such as the U.K., U.S. and Australia in recruiting professional staff.

"Memorial University can become an important attractor for prospective immigrants. Our academic and research programs are in good demand by international students and our services enable them to become familiar with the opportunities and culture of our province. Many of the international students are interested in staying in the province upon the completion of their studies. We could therefore look to attracting some international students with the view of their becoming future immigrants."

Axel Meisen
President
Memorial University

Secondly, Memorial University along with the College of the North Atlantic and other educational institutions is keenly interested in increasing the number of international students, and an immigration strategy would be mutually beneficial in this regard to the institutions and the Province.

Thirdly, Memorial University is the largest 'multicultural community' in the province and lessons could be learned from their experiences. Many of the existing multicultural groups in the province, such as the Multicultural Women's Organization, and Friends of India Association, had their beginnings at Memorial.

Professional Associations/Regulatory Bodies

Many immigrants face significant barriers in trying to find suitable employment in Newfoundland and Labrador. While many are well-educated and highly qualified professionals, their hard-earned credentials are not always recognized by professional organizations, regulatory bodies or potential employers. As a result, some immigrants are unable to practice in the profession for which they were educated.

Professional associations and regulatory bodies will be key stakeholders given their role in the assessment and recognition of international credentials. Finding creative ways to bridge the skills gaps of internationally-trained individuals will be crucial to the success of an immigration strategy.

What a Provincial Immigration Strategy Could Look Like

Target Levels for Attraction and Retention

A specific target level for increased numbers and a realistic rate of retention for Newfoundland and Labrador will be identified after consultations with key stakeholders.

In addition to targets, a number of initiatives and key elements could be considered as part of a provincial immigration strategy:

- **Raising awareness and dispelling myths about immigration**. This could be accomplished by making people aware of the historic contributions of immigrants, the professional expertise they have brought, and the economic contributions they have made and continue to make. The preparation of an inventory of successful immigrant entrepreneurs who have established businesses here and employed local residents would be useful. Publication of a magazine featuring immigrant entrepreneurs would be helpful. Local media (TV, Cable, Newspapers) could also be engaged in the awareness building process

- **Actively marketing and promoting Newfoundland Labrador** as a desirable destination for potential immigrants. This would involve the development of promotional materials for distribution to overseas visa posts, the development of a website promoting the province and providing accurate, relevant information, and possibly engaging in international immigration conferences or fairs (either on our own or in partnership with the other Atlantic provinces). The general thrust of the campaign would be to promote the province of Newfoundland and Labrador as one of the best places in Canada in which to live, work, study, do business, and raise a family.

- **Both a rural and urban focus.** It is important that the strategy is not just focused on the St. John's metropolitan area. There are considerable challenges as well as huge potential in the rural areas of the province. It is in the rural areas that some of the demographic challenges are the greatest, as well as the need to maintain an appropriate level of service for residents. The recruitment (and retention) of rural

physicians is a key example. Also, there are examples where immigrants have established businesses in rural areas and are helping to keep areas economically viable.

- **Encouraging immigrants who initially come here to make Newfoundland and Labrador their permanent home.** This would involve the development of a 'welcoming community' strategy for the province as well as specific efforts to assist newcomers in integrating successfully to both the work life and social life of the province. Such a strategy would consider all family members, including children and spouses who do not work outside the home.

- **Promoting the Newfoundland and Labrador Provincial Nominee Program (PNP)** as a more useful tool to attract immigrants with the specific skill sets (both professional and entrepreneurial) needed in the province. The current PNP agreement expires on December 31, 2005, and allows the province to nominate 400 candidates. In order to take advantage of the potential of the program, staffing levels will need to be enhanced to administer the program. Promotion of the PNP would involve a marketing campaign including workshops for the business community and other stakeholders throughout the province.

- **Developing a multicultural policy for the province.** Most provinces have a multicultural policy which encourages embracing diversity and fostering harmonious relations among people of diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds. The provincial government could consider developing a multicultural policy and work to incorporate principles of diversity and inclusiveness when designing provincial government programs, including seeking out diverse perspectives in public policy processes. While the provincial government offers a one-day workshop on cultural diversity, it focuses primarily on the Aboriginal culture. Consideration could be given to expanding the workshop to include interactions with other cultures and mandate its delivery to all public servants.

- **Developing a diversity policy for employment in the Newfoundland and Labrador public service.** Implementation of such a policy would send a very positive message to the immigrant community, encourage greater understanding of various cultures, improve service delivery to clients of different nationalities, and generally promote the positive aspects of diversity. It is the view in many provinces that the public service should mirror the diversity of the people it serves.

- **Partnering with Memorial University, College of the North Atlantic, Humber Education Alliance, Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Career Colleges, and the Newfoundland International Student Education Program** in increasing the numbers of international students studying in Newfoundland and Labrador. The international student body offers a huge potential to increase the number of immigrants to our province. Currently, there are over 800 international students studying in the province, and some may be encouraged to stay upon graduation – they already speak the language, are familiar with our culture, have made friends, are used to our weather, and most importantly have credentials easily recognized by local employers. International graduates have specific skill sets that could be useful in sectors with impending skills shortages.

- **Improving Access to Provincial Government Services.** Immigrants to Newfoundland and Labrador sometimes face barriers and challenges when accessing government services. To help address this issue, government departments could consider building cross-cultural competency throughout the public service in order to provide the services needed by members of an increasingly diverse population.

- **Improving Access to English as a Second Language (ESL) training.** English language training is a priority for newcomers and crucial to successful settlement and integration. While basic language training (Language Instruction for New Canadians, LINC), funded by the federal government, is accessible to newcomers, this training is not always enough to allow full participation in the social, cultural, civic, and economic aspects of life in Newfoundland and Labrador. Some immigrants face language challenges in their search for appropriate employment, in their pursuit of college/university studies, and in access to their own professions. A recent new program in Enhanced Language Training ensures newcomers in the St. John's area better access to the language instruction they need; however, immigrants who settle in rural areas of the province do not have easy access to language training. The Province could encourage Memorial University and College of the North Atlantic to develop a consistent ESL strategy to ensure an efficient use of resources and transferability of course credits. The Province could also consider supporting applications to CIC for increased funding by ESL delivery organizations (e.g. MUN, College of the North Atlantic and the Association for New Canadians).

- **Improve processes for Credential Assessment and Recognition.** For many immigrants, securing employment in their chosen fields is a key motivator when choosing a place to settle. Unfortunately, many immigrants face barriers to having their international qualifications and experience recognized and, in some cases, their professional licensing validated. To facilitate the assessment and recognition of foreign credentials, government must work with professional bodies, industry associations, employers, and training institutions. The federal department of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) recently announced $68 million over 6 years to fund projects that will help to address this crucial issue. Government could work with the ANC and other stakeholders with a view to pursuing additional federal funding for projects in this area to complement the programs already funded by HRSDC and HRLE.

- **Focus on Women's Issues.** During the development of the provincial immigration strategy, particular attention will be given to the experiences of immigrant women in the province including rural areas. Issues such as barriers to employment, human rights, cultural norms and expectations affecting family life, and violence prevention will all be explored. Barriers such as isolation, access to employment, special child care supports as well as cultural preservation and development need to be considered from a gender perspective.

- **Encouraging attendance at multicultural events and Citizenship ceremonies.** A great way to learn about the cultural and social benefits of immigration is participation in multicultural events such as food and craft fairs. Also extremely beneficial and rewarding is attendance at Citizenship ceremonies which allows one to see our province and our country through the eyes of newcomers. Such an experience can enhance appreciation for immigration.

Stakeholder Consultations

A number of interested groups are supportive of the province's plan to develop an immigration strategy and have agreed to work with the province on this initiative.

- Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency
- Department of Canadian Heritage
- Citizenship and Immigration Canada
- Human Resources and Skills Development Canada
- The Association for New Canadians
- The City of St. John's
- The Leslie Harris Centre of Memorial University
- Provincial Physician Recruitment Office
- Province's Innovation Office
- French Services Unit, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
- Rural Secretariat
- Memorial University (President; International Recruitment Office; Dean of Graduate Studies)
- Newfoundland and Labrador Health Boards Association
- Canadian Federation for Independent Business
- Community Business Development Corporations
- Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour
- Newfoundland and Labrador Business Caucus
  - Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Technology Industries
  - Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador
  - Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters Newfoundland and Labrador
  - Newfoundland and Labrador Chamber of Mineral Resources
  - St. John's Board of Trade
  - Newfoundland and Labrador Employers' Council

This is not a complete list of stakeholders which will be consulted.

The Consultation Process

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador will seek input on the proposed immigration strategy by conducting stakeholder consultations in the fall of 2005. Members of the general public are invited to provide feedback through written submissions. They should be submitted on or before October 14, 2005, by email at immigration@gov.nl.ca, or by sending them to the following address:

Immigration Policy and Planning
Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment
P. O. Box 8700
St. John's, NL
A1B 4J6

The results of the consultations and public comments on the discussion paper will be summarized in a "What we Heard" document and used to prepare a Provincial Immigration Strategy for government's consideration. The province will need to prioritize areas for future action within the context of its available resources. If the provincial immigration strategy is approved, it is envisioned that implementation will commence in early 2006.

Appendices

Appendix A

Questions for Consideration

- What should the priority focus of an immigration strategy be?
  - Increasing the number of skilled professionals focusing on those skills not available in the province?
  - Increasing the number of international students studying in the province?
  - Increasing the number of immigrant entrepreneurs who will start business enterprises in the province?
  - Increasing the number of immigrants under the family reunification category to help increase the retention rates of those already here?
  - Increasing the number of government-assisted refugees destined to the Province?
- How can increased immigration help to address the revitalization of rural areas?
- How can increased immigration help to address anticipated labour market shortages?
- Should the Provincial Government provide incentives to employers to hire immigrants?
- What incentives, if any, could be offered for immigrants to settle in Newfoundland and Labrador?
- How should the province promote itself to potential immigrants? What features of the province should be emphasized?
- Should the province target specific countries?
- What can government do to improve the retention rate of immigrants?
- What can communities do to increase retention?
- What is a reasonable target level for attraction? Retention rate?
- What could be done to encourage private sponsorships of refugees?
- Who else should we talk to in developing the strategy?

Appendix B

Immigration Categories in Canada

A permanent resident is a person who has been accepted as an immigrant to Canada and who has arrived in Canada. The phrase "landed immigrant" has a similar meaning.

A permanent resident can lose that status if he or she does not comply with certain conditions. Permanent residents have most of the rights enjoyed by Canadian citizens under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. However, they do not have the right to run for Parliament, vote in a federal election, or hold a Canadian passport.

A permanent resident may apply for Canadian citizenship if he or she has lived in Canada for three years or more, is able to communicate in English or French, has a degree of knowledge about Canada, and knows about the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

Classes of Immigration

Class	Sub Class	Eligibility under IRPA*
Family Class		Canadian citizens or permanent residents may sponsor the following members of the family class living abroad: • Spouses, common-law or conjugal partners, 16 years of age or older • Parents and grandparents • Dependent children, including adopted children • Children under 18 years of age whom you intend to adopt • Children under guardianship (where the province of destination will recognize the guardianship under provincial law) • Brothers, sisters, nephews, nieces, or grandchildren who are orphans under age 18 and not married or in a common-law relationship • Any other relative, if the sponsor has no relative as described above, either abroad or in Canada
Refugee Class		Convention refugees are those who: • have a well founded fear of persecution based on their race, religion, nationality, political opinions, or membership in a particular social group • are outside the country of their nationality and are unable or, by reason of that fear, are unwilling to be protected by that country • not having a country of nationality, are outside the country of their former habitual residence and are unable or, by reason of that fear, are unwilling to return to that country
Economic Class	Skilled Worker	Requires a pass mark of 67 points (out of 100) under federal criteria such as education level, language ability, employment offer, etc.
	Business Immigrant	• Investor (invests at least at least $400,000, has net worth of $800,000+) • Entrepreneur (managerial experience, $300,000 net worth, sufficient points) • Self-employed person
	Provincial Nominee	Categories in Newfoundland and Labrador's program: Skilled worker Immigrant Entrepreneur Immigrant Partner

*Immigration and Refugee Protection Act

More information about immigration to Canada can be found on the Citizenship and Immigration Canada website, ***http://www.cic.gc.ca***.

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